



OCA Fine Arts

Handbook

* Please note this handbook is a dynamic document, with ongoing updates as needed.
Thank you for remaining aware of the most current procedures and policies for OCA.

August 2023

Welcome to the Oakwood Christian Academy Fine Arts Program. It is a blessing to have the opportunity to work with your students and family. We believe that Fine Arts are an important foundation for ministry, and we hope not only to build up students through music and drama, but also to develop them spiritually.

Our Fine Arts Program leadership is led by Ms. Myra Cook - Fine Arts Coordinator, teacher of General Music, Chorus, Drama, and the Director of productions. Our co-leadership consists of Mrs. Laura Purser - Band Director, Mr. Drew Tankersley, assistant to Choral and Musical Theatre as well as, Mitchel Wooten, Assistant Director for productions.

Our Sr High Fine Arts individuals and teams compete in the Georgia Association of Christian Schools Fine Arts competition (GACS), Georgia Music Educators Association District Honors, Solo and Ensembles (GMEA), and the American Association of Christian Schools National competition (AACCS). Our Jr High School and Elementary Fine Arts individuals and teams also compete in the Georgia Association of Christian Schools competition (GACS) and Georgia Music Educators Association District Honors, Solo and Ensembles (GMEA).

We encourage our students to be involved in curricular activities as well as extra-curricular. Each year's production will give your student the opportunity to do just that by being a part of the cast and crew of our Sr. High Fall Production and our Elementary Christmas Program. These opportunities will allow your student to gain character traits which will also aid them in the classroom and with being successful in life. Many life lessons are learned through Fine Arts that will assist students in character development.

We are excited about what God is doing through our Fine Arts program to help lead our community to Christ.

We trust the information provided makes the experience of you and your student with Oakwood Christian Academy Fine Arts enjoyable, rewarding and character building. We look forward to partnering with you as we encourage your student to live a life pleasing to God.

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Programs Offered

SR HIGH PROGRAMS

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Sr High GACS Chorus | Grades 9 - 12 |
| Sr High GACS Band | Grades 7 - 12 |
| Sr High GACS Drama | Grades 9 - 12 |
| Sr High Production | Grades 7 - 12 |

JR HIGH PROGRAMS

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Jr High GACS Chorus | Grades 7 - 8 |
| Jr High GACS Drama | Grades 7 - 8 |
| Jr High GACS Instrumentals | Grades 7 - 8 |

ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Elementary Band | Grades 5 - 6 |
| Elementary General Music | Grades K - 6 |
| Elementary Christmas Program | Grades 1 - 6 |

Purpose of OCA Fine Arts

We believe Fine Arts are an important foundation for ministry and a tool to build up students through music and drama with the expressed purpose to help develop them spiritually. The Fine Arts leadership's desire is to encourage and promote the use of a student's God given gifts and talents to reach their friends, family, school and community for Christ.

**Students who choose to participate in both Athletics and Fine Arts events will be expected to follow the policies and procedures for each group. On occasion, this may result in a conflict of schedules between two events, at which point the student, parents, Fine Arts Coordinator/representative and the AD/coach and Administration would come together to discuss a reasonable solution that will best serve the interest of the student and the two groups. Such discussions could result in the reduction of a major role in a production, inability to participate in competition or less playing time in games for the student.*

OCA Jr & Sr High Chorus Goals, Policies and Procedures

Purpose

Sr High Chorus is for the purpose of preparing students for competition. It is a **co-curricular program** which means some activities occur outside regular school hours. Students will be expected to attend the required rehearsals and performances. Students who wish to be a part of the group will compete at both the state level (GACS) and national level (AACCS) in the Spring. Students will need to audition if the number of students is greater than 24 in the large choir. Students who wish to participate in smaller ensembles, as well as, individual vocal events are required to be in the Chorus class. Sr High meets Monday - Friday during seventh period. Students will also perform at the annual OCA Fine Arts Showcase.

Homework

Students will be expected to work on breath control and diction by doing exercises in front of a mirror. Students will also bring home music that is being prepared for competition. Audio music will be available online to sing along with the sheet music.

Grades

Grades are based on the following scale:

1. Attendance is crucial to maintaining an above "C" grade. Attendance in the classroom must be a priority as we only meet one time a week during the school day and only a few after school rehearsals closer to performance time. Unexcused absences from class time will result in a "0" and 3

unexcused absences from class time will result in one letter grade drop. **Attendance counts for 10% of a student's grade.**

2. Informal Assessments in which participation in class and homework practice are used to gauge the progress of a student. Good rehearsals in class are more effective if a student is doing their part at home as well as during class time. **Informal Assessments count as 40% of a student's grade.**
3. Formal Assessments in which Competition and Showcase performances are graded as Formal Assessments. Students are expected to perform at all scheduled performances. Failure to perform will result in a grade of "0" for that performance. Only in the event of an emergency situation will an Alternative Lesson Plan be given to a student as a substitute for that performance grade. **Formal Assessments count as 50% of a student's grade.**

OCA Jr & Sr High Drama Goals, Policies, and Procedures

Purpose

Sr High Drama is for the purpose of preparing students for competition. It is a **co-curricular program** which means that some activities occur outside regular school hours. Students will be expected to attend the required rehearsals and performances. Students who wish to be a part of the group will compete at both the state level (GACS) and national level (AACCS) in the Spring. Students will need to audition if the number of students is greater than 6 in Reader's Theatre. Those who wish to participate in smaller ensembles, as well as, individual speech events are required to be in the Drama class. Jr and Sr High meets Monday - Friday during seventh period. Students will also perform at the annual OCA Fine Arts Showcase.

Homework

Students will be expected to work on breath control and diction by doing exercises in front of a mirror. Students will also bring home scripts that are being prepared for competition.

Grades

Grades are based on the following scale:

1. Attendance is crucial to maintaining an above "C" grade. Attendance in the classroom must be a priority as we only meet one time a week during school

and only a few after school rehearsals closer to performance time. Unexcused absences from class time will result in a “0” and 3 unexcused absences from class time will result in a one letter grade drop. **Attendance counts for 10% of a student’s grade.**

2. Informal Assessments in which participation in class and homework practice are used to gauge the progress of a student. Good rehearsals in class are more effective if a student is doing their part at home as well as during class time. **Informal Assessments count as 40% of a student’s grade.**
3. Formal Assessments in which Competition and Showcase performances are graded as Formal Assessments. Students are expected to perform at all scheduled performances. Failure to perform will result in a grade of “0” for that performance. Only in the event of an emergency situation will an Alternative Lesson Plan be given to a student as a substitute for that performance grade. **Formal Assessments count as 50% of a student’s grade.**

Production Goals, Policies and Procedures

Sr High OCA Production Commitment Policy

1. Rules for any school-sponsored production event will be in conjunction with rules and policies in the OCA Student/Parent Handbook. We expect our students to be leaders and set good examples at all times, in every situation at school and off campus. The discipline codes will coincide with the Discipline section of the Student/Parent Handbook.
2. **A student must be enrolled in OCA for the school year to be offered a place in that year’s production. This also includes Homeschoolers which are enrolled in Fine Arts classes for that school year.** All students must maintain a “C or higher” average throughout the production season. If a student is failing a particular class, he or she will NOT be able to audition or practice with the cast during the production process until the grade is brought up to a passing “C or higher” level. Absolutely no exceptions will be made for this policy.
3. Students are expected to be at every production practice/event and be on time to every practice and event. Any absence or tardiness for practice and/or event should be communicated directly to the Director. **Excessive absences whether due to sickness or failure to appear will result in a student being dismissed from the production and the part being given to an understudy.** This teaches OCA students responsibility, commitment, and teamwork towards their fellow cast mates, crew and directors. Missing practice also places a greater burden on those at practice and hurts the effectiveness during a performance.
4. A schedule of all upcoming auditions, summer and in school practices and our Sr High Production **Drama Camp** is given. The Drama Camp is 4 days of

practice in July for all cast and is a required event. Cost is \$20 per student to cover meals and expenses. Snacks will be available to purchase if desired. All students are expected to participate in Drama Camp.

5. **Students (cast and crew) are required to individually sell \$150 in Ads for the Sr. High production playbill. If \$150 in ads are not sold, a \$150 participation fee will be required to be paid.**

Eligibility For Participation

1. In order to sign up for Sr High OCA Fine Arts Production, a student must maintain grades of “C or higher”.
2. Students must maintain a “C or higher” after every midterm and 9-week grading period. One failing grade will result in a 2 week practice “suspension” or until the grade is brought back up to the minimum. If the student does not bring the grade up after the 2 week period, the student will be placed on Academic Probation and may result in the loss of a cast role.
3. Production practice and events are no excuse for late classroom work. Each student is expected to complete all homework and assignments regardless of practice or performance events. In the event of an off-campus rehearsal or early leave from school, it is the responsibility of the student to complete all assignments for all classes missed prior to leaving school.
4. Students having office referrals at school for behavior will have immediate probation and may have involvement in the production immediately suspended.

Auditions/Interviews For Casting and Stage Crew

1. Success is not based on the acting role of our students. Success is contributing to the production's success by using their God given talents and abilities.
2. Life lessons are learned from being part of a production cast.
3. Every eligible student has the opportunity to audition/interview for a production part. However, **not everyone will make the cut.**
4. Students who audition/interview will be given every opportunity to demonstrate and improve their skills and prove their ability to their directors, and thus increase their chances of playing a significant part in the production.
5. Parents must instruct and prepare their children for participation in the audition/interview process at OCA. We are preparing students for life, and the audition/interview process will be encountered in the world after graduating high school. In every aspect of life you will have this process.

6. Students are expected to work hard, be committed, be dedicated, be self-disciplined, and be determined on and off the stage. We want our students to be in their relationship with God, their musical and drama skills, and academic knowledge.
7. Our students must show leadership in all activities on and off campus.
8. Directors will make every effort to allow each student the opportunity of auditioning/interviewing for a part, but a specified part is never guaranteed and should never be expected.

Communication That Parents Should Expect From Directors

1. Expectations for your student
2. Locations and times of practices and events
3. Cast requirements...in-school/summer practices and drama camp
4. Discipline that may result in denial of your child's participation
5. The student's attitude, work ethic, and eligibility
6. Procedures for contacting directors

Communication That Directors Should Expect From Parents

1. Notification of any schedule conflicts
2. Notification of sickness
3. Emails with questions or concerns

Dress Code Expectations of Students

Students will adhere to the dress code provided by the school administration.

1. Students will be in the school dress code for all Production practices. This includes practices in-school or after school, on campus or off campus. All drama camp practices will follow spirit wear dress code.
2. Students involved in practice for a sport which will follow Production practice will NOT be allowed to change until after they leave the drama practice. This will help to comply with the school's request to stay in dress code while still on campus.
3. Students will stay in dress code while off campus. This is in compliance with the field trip dress code unless otherwise specified by the administration.

4. Students will stay in dress code during Drama Camp unless otherwise specified by the administration.

OCA Fine Arts Sr High Production Parent/Student Contract *(Sample of a Contract- Do Not Sign)*

The following is a contractual agreement between the student (student's name) and the Leadership of OCA's Fine Arts Production.

At Oakwood Christian Academy we acknowledge that the parents play a vital role in what we do at this school. It is our goal for all parents and students involved in the Production to understand it is of the utmost importance to the school that we represent Christ in everything we do. Productions are a great opportunity to show our relationship with Christ and we want those who are unsure of their faith to know Christ personally.

We understand the importance of the responsibility that is set before us and commit to conduct ourselves in accordance with the things stated above as well as the following guidelines:

1. **I understand and confirm that my student is enrolled in OCA for the current school year or a Homeschool Student enrolled in Fine Arts classes and is eligible to be offered a place in the production.**
2. I will treat all directors, cast, and production crew with respect at all times.
3. I will not make any unnecessary comments to any directors, cast, or crew during practice or events. It is understood that the cast and stage crew members must be present and on time to practices/events and drama camp. The director should be informed in a timely manner if this is not possible. Excessive absences, whether due to sickness or failure to appear, will result in a student being dismissed from the production and the part being given to an understudy.
4. I understand that directors will have all closed practices (no spectators) and I will fully comply with those wishes.
5. I will NOT speak negatively of the school, the Fine Arts program or anyone involved with the production. This also includes all postings on social media.
6. I understand that any student discipline during school hours will affect student participation.
7. If I have a concern I will not approach the directors before practice/event or directly after a practice/event. I agree to follow the chain of command with a private appointment. The chain of command is first the directors, the Fine Arts Coordinator and directors, and if needed the school's administration.
8. I understand even if a student earns a part in the cast or ensemble (major character or understudy) or as part of the stage crew; it does NOT guarantee the part or position of choice.

9. I understand that my student may have to purchase special dance shoes and undergarments needed for the production.
10. I will support my child by volunteering where my abilities allow. I will always be a good supporter and encourager.
11. I understand that as part of my student's involvement, whether cast or crew, in the Fine Arts Production they are **required to sell \$150 in Ads for the playbill by the assigned date**. Failure to sell the required Ads will result in a \$150 participation fee to be paid or the student will be dismissed from the cast or crew of the production.

I understand that failure to comply with this agreement can affect my/my child's position with the production.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____
(*Sample of Contract - Do Not Sign*)

Elementary GACS Choir & Drama Goals, Policies and Procedures

Purpose

Elementary GACS Chorus and Drama is for the purpose of preparing students for competition. It is an **extra-curricular program** which means activities occur outside regular school hours. Students will be expected to attend the required rehearsals and performances. Students who wish to be a part of the group will compete at the state level (GACS) in the Spring. Students will need to audition, if the number of students is greater than 24 for choir, and 2 in Duet Acting. Those who wish to participate in smaller ensembles, as well as individual speech events are required to meet after school to prepare for competition.

Elementary General Music Goals, Policies and Procedures

Purpose

Elementary General Music class (grades 1st - 6th) is for the purpose of preparing students for the annual Christmas musical and gaining individual music knowledge using a music based curriculum. It is a **co-curricular program** which means that activities occur outside regular school hours as related to Auditions, Rehearsals and Performance of the Christmas Program. Students in 3rd - 6th grades will have the opportunity to audition for a drama part or solo in the Christmas Musical and will be expected to attend required after school rehearsals, if chosen for a part.

Homework

Students will be expected to listen at home to the Christmas Musical CD, which will be provided to each family. Students chosen for parts will also bring home scripts and solos that are being prepared for the musical performance.

Grades

Grades are based on the following scale:

K5 - 2nd Grades:

1. Attendance/Behavior/Participation are crucial to maintaining an above "C" grade. These three areas must be a priority as we only meet one time a week during the school day. Unexcused absences from class time will result in a "0" and 3 unexcused absences from class time will result in a one letter grade drop. **A/B/P counts for 100% of a student's grade.** The required Christmas musical is counted as the Semester Final exam.

3rd - 6th Grades:

1. Attendance is crucial to maintaining an above "C" grade. Attendance in the classroom must be a priority as we only meet one time a week during the school day. Unexcused absences from class time will result in a "0" and 3 unexcused absences from class time will result in a one letter grade drop. **Attendance counts for 10% of a student's grade.**
2. Informal Assessments, in which participation in class and homework practice are used to gauge the progress of a student. Good rehearsals in class are more effective if a student is doing their part at home as well as during class time. **Informal Assessments count as 40% of a student's grade.**
3. Formal Assessments include tests and quizzes and in which the Christmas Musical performance is graded as a Semester Final exam. Students are expected to take all tests and quizzes given and to perform at all scheduled performances. Failure to make up a quiz or test or to perform will result in a grade of "0" for that test or performance. Only in the event of an emergency situation will an Alternative Lesson Plan be given to a student as a substitute for that missing grade. **Formal Assessments count as 50% of a student's grade.**

**Please sign and return this page after reading the
Fine Arts Handbook for Chorus, Drama, and
Productions.**

We have read and understand what is expected as an OCA Fine Arts student/parent. We agree to contact Ms. Cook when we have any questions or concerns.

Parent signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Student signature: _____ **Date:** _____

OCA Band Handbook

Welcome

Welcome to the Oakwood Christian Academy Band program. I am so honored and excited to be your teacher again this year, and I am thrilled that the Lord has led me to OCA. I'm looking forward to a wonderful year with each of you as we grow musically and grow in Christ together.

Program Goals

The Bible tells us that we are each made in God's image (Genesis 1:27), and are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). As such, we each have unique skills and talents to use within the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). Musical ensembles are outstanding representations of this, as we each make different but equally important contributions to the group. You will be expected to give your very best effort on assignments, during rehearsals, and performances.

Some of you may find that the music we play in class is very challenging; others of you may find it easy and may learn it very quickly. If you feel that you need more of a challenge, please let me know. I want you to learn as much as you can and be the best you can be!

Also, when you need help, please do not hesitate to let me know. I want to do whatever it takes to help you be successful, and will help you in any way that I can.

Co-Curricular Status

The OCA band program is a **co-curricular** program. This means that some activities occur outside regular school hours, particularly for the Jr High/Sr High band. Students are expected to attend the required practices and performances.

Performing Groups

The **5th-6th grade band** will focus on basic music techniques and instrumental skills. This group will have solo and ensemble performance opportunities throughout the year which may include, but are not limited to, school programs, performances at nursing homes and community events, and GACS Fine Arts competition (strongly recommended for second year students). Girls will wear black tea length dresses provided by OCA Fine Arts for GACS performances. Boys will wear a long sleeved, white dress shirt, black pants, bow tie, and cummerbund for GACS performances. The bow ties and cummerbunds are provided by OCA Fine Arts.

The **7th-12th grade band** will perform for the school-wide Christmas program, GACS Fine Arts Competition, AACS competition if selected, and the OCA Fine Arts Showcase. The 7th and 8th grade girls will wear black, tea length dresses provided by OCA Fine Arts for performances. Boys will wear a long sleeved, white dress shirt, black pants, and a vest with a long tie. The vests and ties are provided by OCA Fine Arts.

The 9th-12th grade boys will wear tuxedos which are provided by OCA Fine Arts. The girls will wear black formal gowns also provided by OCA Fine Arts. Band students may also audition for and participate in Shorter Band day (grades 9-12 grades only), District Honor Band/All-State, and solo/ensemble if they are interested. More details later.

All band students need black dress shoes for his/her uniform.

Each student will pay a uniform rental fee as part of the trip cost for the GACS competition in the Spring. More details on this later.

Communication

Please feel free to contact me through email or Remind (Jr/Sr High) with any questions or concerns. I will get back to you as quickly as possible.

Remind codes:

7th-12th grade band: Text @oca712 to 81010

I will send announcements through email, Remind (Jr/Sr High) and Google Classroom (Jr/Sr High). Your child may also have assignments, including playing tests, from time to time. The 5th and 6th grade students have the option of completing these in person or by emailing me a video of the student playing.

Most 7-12 grade playing tests will be completed through Google Classroom. Please check your student's Google Classroom account periodically to make sure they are up to date on assignments, etc.

Practicing

Regular practice is vital to our improvement as an ensemble, as well as your improvement as an individual musician. Students will be assigned various scales and technical exercises, as well as ensemble pieces for practice at home. We will have graded playing exams on a regular basis to measure progress and to see where each student's strengths and weaknesses lie.

I know our schedules are busy; if your student can make an effort to practice outside of class 4-5 times per week, they will see significant improvement. For a beginning student, 15-20 minutes is recommended as muscles are developing. You may find that your student gets tired quickly during those first few months. Please be assured that this is normal.

For older students, 25-30 minutes of practice per session is recommended. If you'd like to practice longer, go for it! The more you practice, the better you'll get.

Private lessons are highly recommended, if you have the time and financial resources. I realize that this is not an option for some students for various reasons. However, if you are interested, please let me know and I will connect you with a teacher for your specific instrument.

Instruments and Supplies

If you have rented an instrument from OCA in the past, you will still have the option of doing so for an annual fee of \$25. New students who are playing large instruments (baritone, tuba, etc) will have the option of renting, as well as students who cannot obtain an instrument for financial reasons, while supplies last.

Most new students will need to purchase an instrument or rent an instrument from Gadsden Music Company. After we have completed mouthpiece testing and your child has been assigned an instrument, please contact them for further information on purchases and rentals.

Please do not purchase an instrument from another source without consulting me first.

There are many cheap, poorly made instruments available for sale on the internet that cannot be repaired when they malfunction. I would hate for you to spend money on an instrument that malfunctions within a few months, only to find out it can't be repaired.

Gadsden Music Company
607 Broad Street
Gadsden, AL 35901
(256) 546-9381
www.gadsdenmusic.com

Grading Policy

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Rehearsal skills/class preparedness | 40% |
| Playing/written assignments | 20% (high school) 30% (elementary) |
| Performances | 30% |
| Attendance | 10% (high school) |
| Total | 100% |

Students are expected to have their instruments and all related supplies, as well as music and a pencil, in class each day. If you have your materials each day, are prepared for class, and do your best in rehearsal, your rehearsal skills grade should be 100.

Performances

The Jr/Sr High band will perform at the OCA Christmas Fine Arts program in December. Jr/Sr High GACS is in March and AACS is in April. The OCA Fine Arts Showcase will be held in March. Elementary GACS is in April.

We may have some other performance opportunities as the year progresses. I will send other performance dates as they are scheduled. I know families are busy and I like to send information out as quickly as possible, so I will send those dates as soon as I have them.

**Students who choose to participate in both Athletics and Fine Arts Events will be expected to follow the policies and procedures for each group. On occasion, this may result in a conflict of schedules between two events, at which point the student, parents, Fine Arts Coordinator/representative and the AD/coach and Administration would come together to discuss a reasonable solution that will best serve the interest of the student and the two groups. Such discussions could result in the reduction of a major role in a production, inability to participate in competition or less playing time in games for the student.*

Please sign and return this page after reading the Band Handbook.

We have read and understand what is expected as an OCA Band student/parent. We agree to contact Mrs. Purser when with any questions or concerns.

Parent signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Student signature: _____ **Date:** _____